

THE  
BETTER  
LIFE

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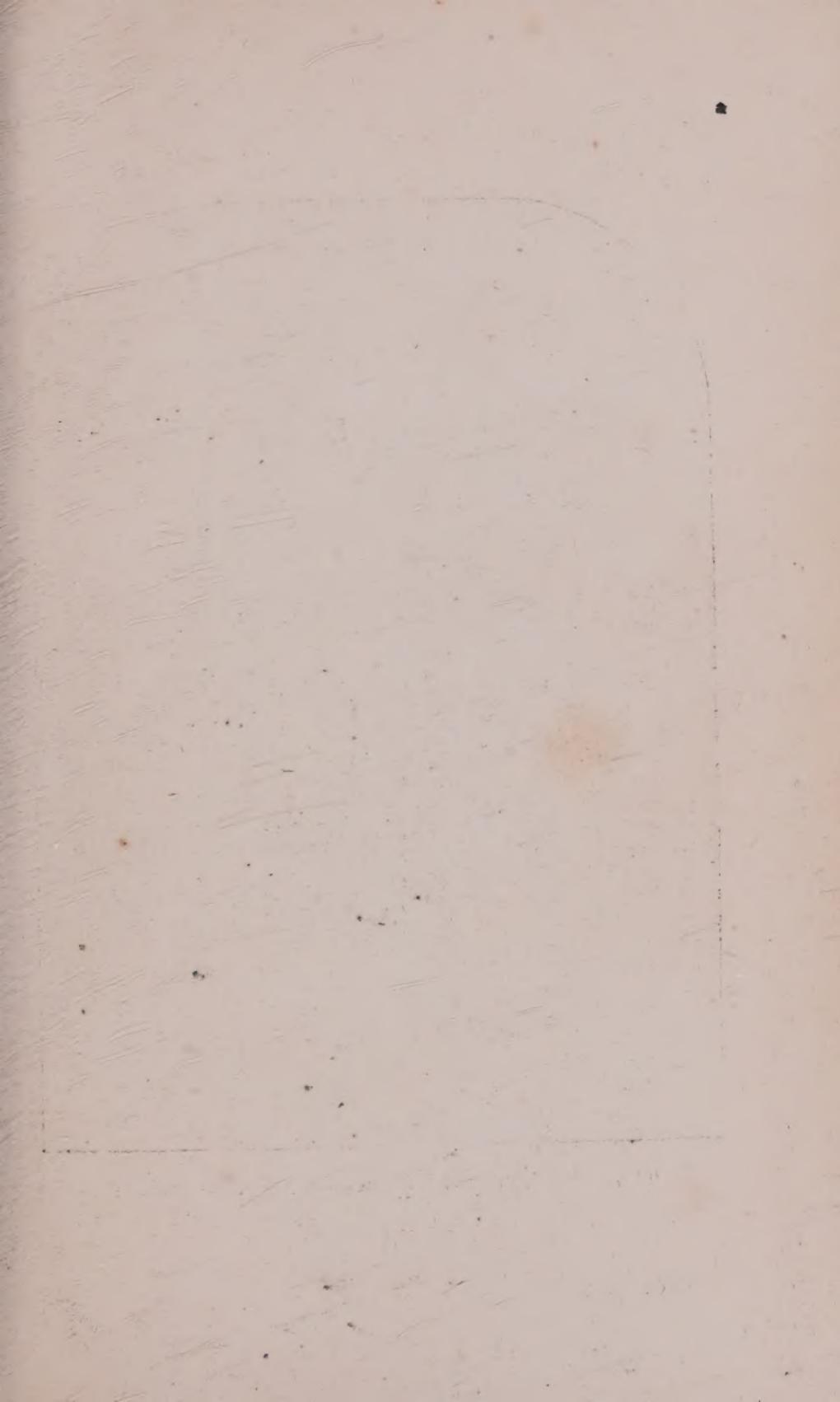








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"I was perfectly miserable and could hardly be worse." —page 31.

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# THE BETTER LIFE,

AND

## HOW TO FIND IT.

FOR

YOUNG MEN AND YOUNG WOMEN,

WHO HAVE NOT REALIZED BY HAPPY EXPERIENCE,  
THE PEACE AND JOY THERE IS, EVEN IN  
THIS WORLD, IN BELIEVING IN  
JESUS.

BY

Rev. Edward Payson Hammond,  
Author of "Gathered Lambs," "Sketches of Palestine,"  
"Child's Guide to Heaven," &c.

LOS ANGELES BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## TO THE READER.

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**A**Y DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,—Allow me to tell you one or two reasons why I wish you to read this book.

When young persons, between the ages of fourteen and twenty, are asked why they are not Christians, I have noticed that the answers which they at first give are various. But when more closely questioned, and kindly conversed with upon the subject, I have found that, after all, their real objection to becoming Christians, is the fear that they shall be called upon to part with pleasures greater than any they may hope to gain by following Christ.

I have therefore often thought, that if young people could be led to see and believe that religion is for this world as well as the world to come, and that those who love the Saviour are far happier here than others, as well as sure of never-ending joy hereafter, they would be more in earnest to enter the shining path that leads to *the Better Life*.

Hence I have sought in the following pages, by argument and illustration, to prove this. That the Holy Spirit may use it to lead you, with many others, to experience “joy unspeakable,” through faith in the Lord Jesus, is the prayer of

Your sincere friend,

E. P. H.

Vernon, Conn., June, 1869.

# THE BETTER LIFE, —AND— HOW TO FIND IT.

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## CHAPTER I.

Cologne cathedral; the painted window — The beauties of God's temple of grace — Happy experience of one within that temple — False views corrected — A joyful testimony — Closing lines.

A party of tourists, on approaching the cathedral of Cologne, in Prussia, a few years since, were each striving to catch the first glimpse of the celebrated painted window. When it was pointed out by the guide, some of the party expressed great disappointment, exclaiming, "Is that all?" but others, who had learned to look on both sides before condemning, said, "Don't be too hasty; wait till we get inside, and then you will be delighted."

When once within the walls of that grand old cathedral, our eyes were gratified with a magnificent work of art. That ancient pile, though still unfinished, celebrated, in 1842, the 600th anniversary of the laying of its corner stone. But nothing interested us more within those Gothic walls than the Scripture scenes portrayed on that stained glass, by the celebrated German painter, Albert Durer. While gazing with such delight upon that exquisite work of genius, we heard a voice, saying, "Don't be so ready again to condemn, till you have seen both sides; don't form too hasty conclusions." We each of us tried to lay to heart the important lesson.

I wonder if you, my dear reader, have yet learned the lesson? Have you been within the beautiful temple of God's grace? If not, you cannot form any estimate of the joys that will fill your soul if you will but let Jesus, the Divine Guide, take you by the hand, and lead you within its blessed precincts. If you, my dear young friend, have passed through the period of childhood without having learned to

rejoice in a Saviour's love, it is very likely that you have come to regard religion as something you will need when you come to die, but that its possession now, just as you are floating out upon the deeper currents of life, would deprive you of many innocent pleasures. I wish I could say something in these lines to show you that religion is for *this* world, as well as for the world to come. Oh! that you might but see that you would indeed be happier, even here on the shores of time, if you were only a true Christian! Yes, while standing within the temple of true religion, here on earth you would often enjoy happy foretastes of heaven, and exclaim with the sweet singer of Israel, “IN THY PRESENCE IS FULNESS OF JOY; AT THY RIGHT HAND THERE ARE PLEASURES FOR EVERMORE!” And others still lingering without Zion’s walls would turn their weary steps thitherward, as they heard you singing for joy, “*In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before Him. He delivered me from my*

*strong enemy. He brought me forth also into a large place.*" (Ps. xviii.) It is my most earnest prayer, that you may be among the number of those who have seen their error in supposing Christians to be morose and gloomy, and that you may with a longing heart exclaim, "One thing have I desired of the Lord ; that will I seek after : that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life : to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple."

How foolish we should have been, had we turned away from that beautiful cathedral in Cologne, because the stained window was not attractive on the wrong side ! But we were not guilty of such folly ; we believed the guide, and those who had seen the window on the right side, and soon realized the truth of their words, and we thought of that passage, "In His temple doth every one speak of His glory." (Ps. xxix. 9.) Yes, those who are reconciled to God, can speak understandingly of His abounding love and mercy, and of the joy there is in serving Him In

the Apostle's description of the celestial city in Rev. xxii. 22, he says, "I saw no temple therein." A temple is a place of reconciliation. In heaven all *are* the friends of God, and so there is no need of a place for reconciliation. But here on earth, those who have with the eye of faith seen our great High Priest laying Himself upon the altar a voluntary sacrifice for the sins of the world, and have there seen justice satisfied, and pardon for a guilty world made possible, cannot but speak of God's glory in His temple. Will you, then, believe what those, who have been thus admitted into communion with God, shall say of the joy of His service?

If you, my dear friend, will but follow their example, and come yourself to the Lord Jesus, you will speak of Him in words something like those which the queen of Sheba addressed to king Solomon: "It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts of wisdom: howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine own eyes have seen it: and behold the half has not

been told me; for thou exceedest the fame that I heard." And as the King of kings shall lead you into the temple not made with hands, you will exclaim, "A greater than Solomon is here!"

I am sure you will like to read what one of God's "witnesses" says of the joys of this new life. I well remember the first night I saw this young lady with two others trifling in a solemn meeting; but, by the Holy Spirit, they were soon convinced of their danger, and led to ask how they could find true and lasting peace of mind. She soon gave herself to Christ, and then wrote me the following account of her conversion. It was not a transient joy which filled her heart; years have now passed away, and she is still "rejoicing in hope"—a light amid darkness, deeply felt because within the circle of home. O that you too might be able to say with her :

"I FEEL NOW A HAPPINESS THAT CAN ONLY BE APPRECIATED BY THOSE WHOSE HEARTS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT INTO SYMPATHY WITH CHRIST, AND THE BEAUTIES OF HOLINESS.

A few years ago my happiness consisted in going to parties, balls, and theatres. I seemed to live a votary of fashion and worldliness. Nothing marred my pleasure from day to day; I had all that heart could wish. I envied no one; for I thought I lived in the perfect enjoyment of life, and no one could be happier than I. But at last death came, and without a moment's warning took from me my dear father, in the full strength of manhood. Oh! what a blow it was to me! The world became cold, dark, and gloomy. The sun still shone as brightly, but did not shine for me. It seemed as if there was nothing on earth to live for. It was a long time before I became calm under the dispensations of Divine providence. Many an hour did I spend in sober, serious reflection, questioning the mysteries of the unseen world. I was solemnly led to look upon the past. Conscience reproached me, and told me that God had thus afflicted me to bring me nearer to Him.

"I have always been instructed carefully

in the rules of morality, but never, till recently, was I advised to give my heart to my Saviour. Had some kind friend taken me aside years ago, and talked and prayed with me as you have done, I should at once have seen my folly, and long ere this sought to live for holier purposes. But no one reproved me, or told me I was doing that which was wrong. The first evening I attended the meeting my attention was arrested, and a deep and lasting impression made on my mind; but I was not willing that any one should know it. The second evening, after I went in, a gentleman took a seat beside me, asked me if I enjoyed religion, and handed me a tract, expressing a desire that I should read it. I very readily took it, folded it up, and placed it in my pocket, not meaning to read it, and moved away from him for fear he should again speak to me. I felt quite indignant; for he knew me, and knew where I attended church, though I had never spoken to him. I can never be grateful enough to you who have directed my thoughts heaven-

ward. I feel that I have found an earthly friend, who has led me to a heavenly Friend. I used to think a Christian must be the dullest and gloomiest of all persons. To become religious was like shutting oneself up in a convent. What a mistaken idea! I am greatly changed in that respect. Religion is needed; it is the ‘pearl of great price’—‘the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.’ I feel its attractions grow stronger and stronger every day; and I now believe every word of the poet who says—

“ ’Tis religion that can give  
Sweetest pleasure while we live;  
’Tis religion must supply  
Solid comfort when we die.

“ ’After death, its joys shall be  
Lasting as eternity:  
God the Father is my Friend,  
And my bliss shall know no end.’

“ Oh, how I wish everybody’s heart could be touched as mine has been, and everybody brought to walk in the blessed light of a Saviour’s love! I feel a spiritual joy now, such as I never felt before—a happiness that

can only be appreciated by those who have been regenerated, whose hearts have been brought into sympathy with Christ and the beauties of holiness. Oh, it would be the unhappiest moment of my life if ever I should grieve God's Holy Spirit, by neglecting to perform the duties I owe as a Christian to heaven and earth. I never mean to do so. I sometimes fear that I may, but I'll bear in mind the words of the Psalmist, who says, 'Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord,' and put my trust in God, praying that my affections may never become estranged from Him, that He will create pure and holy desires within my heart, which shall outlast the changeful scenes of time; and ever lead me to Him who is 'the way, the truth, and the life,' striving to lay the foundations of no earthly happiness here, but endeavoring to prepare myself for a better world.

" 'Be Christ my Pattern and my Guide,  
His image may I bear;  
Oh, may I tread his holy steps,  
His joy and glory share.'

"I have read James' 'Anxious Inquirer,' and became deeply interested in it. My aversion to religious works has changed to a strong liking.' I seek them now; and every morning and night, after reading the Bible, I pray that God will guide me, and teach me to live in such a way, as that all who know me may have proof by my words and actions that I am a true disciple of Christ."

Here is another testimony on this subject from one who can say, "I NEVER KNEW WHAT TRUE ENJOYMENT WAS BEFORE I FOUND THE SAVIOUR."

"I feel so happy in the love of Christ, that I cannot refrain from writing you a few lines. In my first I only told you how I was converted, but now I will speak of the pleasures I find in being on the Lord's side. I always looked upon religion as something very dull and melancholy, and not at all desirable; and I could not understand Christians when they said that true happiness was found only in religion. I did not believe it, and was determined not to risk losing the pleasures and

gayeties of the world to seek it. But now how changed the picture appears to me. *I find I never knew what true enjoyment was before I found the Saviour.* The pleasures of the world are unsatisfying and fleeting, while those of religion are substantial and lasting; and the path that I once thought would be dark and dreary, I find strewed with beautiful flowers. Yes, when we are happy in Jesus, December is as pleasant as May. I never feel happier than when I am endeavoring in the strength of the Lord to direct others to that fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins! Oh, pray for me, that I may be instant in season and out of season; and please pray for all the young converts in Hamilton, that they may all prove faithful, and that we may all meet around God's throne in heaven, to praise Him through the countless ages of eternity.

“I remain, a great debtor to grace,

“M. G.”

Now, my dear friends, this same precious

Saviour, who has filled the hearts of others with the purest joy, is willing to receive you, and fill your soul with gladness such as you never before experienced. He has bled and died on the cross in your stead ; He there suffered the punishment that was due to you for your sins ; he is now able to change the whole current of your being, so that you will love the things in which you once had no pleasure. If you will but come to Him, and let Him lead you into the temple of God's grace, you will understand the force of the truth illustrated by the different appearances presented to those who gaze on either side of the stained glass window in the cathedral of Cologne. Once within God's temple of love, you will discover the beauty of holiness. There, too, many things in God's word and providence will appear no longer shrouded in mystery, but the clear light of God's truth will shine upon them. There you may, with a truthful and understanding heart, repeat the following simple lines, which have been suggested to me by these thoughts :—

Within thy temple we behold  
The riches of thy grace;  
Its beauties, Lord, thou dost unfold  
To those who seek thy face.

Here with enraptured joy we gaze  
On scenes surpassing fair;  
Here would we linger out our days,  
And banish every care.

'Tis here with eye of faith we see  
The Saviour on the cross;  
Here from our sins we are set free,  
Earth's pleasures seem but dross.

Now with distinctness we can trace  
Those lineaments of love,  
That clearly mark the Saviour's face:  
Love brought Him from above.

Truths that before in mystery  
Were shrouded dark as night,  
When gazed upon within those walls,  
Turn radiant with light.

May those who seek in vain for joy,  
'Mid pleasure's giddy round,  
Here give their noblest powers employ,  
Where purest bliss is found.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHEERFUL CHRISTIANS.

Dr. Noah Webster a Christian through the influence of his happy daughter—The soldier saved from suicide—Story of a king always sad: his reasons; application—Hymn of consecration.

**D**HOSE Christians who live near to their Saviour, and who manifest a cheerful, joyful spirit, even while employed in the common duties of life, do much to recommend the religion of Jesus. Multitudes have been allured into “wisdom’s ways” by observing that those who walk in them find them to be “ways of pleasantness.”

The distinguished Noah Webster, the author of the well-known English Dictionary, was thus led to Him who says, “I am the Way.”

His daughter (now the wife of a New England clergyman) related to me a short time since the following interesting facts, which she permitted me to make public. At a time of religious interest in New Haven, in 1807, when Moses Stuart of Andover, was preaching there, he observed the interest which one of Dr. Webster's daughters manifested, and called upon her several times at her father's house, seeking to point her to the Saviour. Dr. Webster, whose religion up to that date had consisted in an outward conformity to the rules of morality, and who sought to regard Christ as a mere man, rather than as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of a condemned world, was much annoyed, and at length manifested his displeasure by plainly telling Mr. Stuart that he did not wish him to call again at his house, as he was able to instruct his own family in the things of religion. His daughter, however, at the time, was, by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, made in Christ a new creature; so that with a happy heart she could exclaim, "Old things are

passed away; behold, all things are become new!"

Her father, observing her from day to day, could not but notice the remarkable change. He had before thought his daughter full of life, and "merry as a lark;" yet he could not but see that she was more truly happy than ever before. He saw exemplified in her daily life the truth of that promise in Isaiah xxvi: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." He could not fail to notice that she exhibited the sweet fruits of the Spirit — "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness." He had always looked upon her as a perfect lady; but these Christian graces, he observed, added new lustre to her character, making her more amiable and winning to all around her. Her cheerful presence was to Dr. Webster an oft-repeated sermon upon the text in Prov. xvi. 20: "Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." With all his profound stores of learning, he found himself ignorant of Christ and

his “finished work.” While, at the same time, he saw that his daughter was possessed of the “wisdom that is from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits.”

At last he was driven to the conclusion, that there was a depth and meaning in the orthodox faith which he had never fathomed. He therefore resolved to spend at least two weeks in the investigation of this all-important subject. For this purpose he shut himself up in his study, laid aside all other pursuits, and gave himself up to the study of God’s Word, and to prayer. Ere long, he saw himself a lost, guilty, helpless sinner; the light of divine truth shining into his heart taught him that it was “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.” (Jer. xvii. 9.) His distress increased, until his cry was, “What shall I do to be saved?” He sent for Mr. Stuart, the very man whom, but a few weeks before, he had refused to admit to his house, and with deep anxiety inquired how God could be just, and yet justify such a sinner as he

found himself to be? Mr. Stuart was rejoiced to point to Him who was lifted up that we might not perish, and to declare, that though "ALL HAVE SINNED," yet, THROUGH THE REDEPTION THAT IS IN CHRIST, God can be JUST, AND THE JUSTIFIER OF HIM WHICH BELIEVETH IN JESUS. (Rom. iii. 23—27.) Before long, he, too, was rejoicing in the love of his first espousals, and had learned the meaning of that verse in Ps. xxv. 14—"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;" and hence the source of his daughter's peace and happiness was no longer a mystery to him.

When his impenitent friends in Boston heard that he had become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, they sought by every means to draw him away from his trust in the Redeemer; but their efforts were in vain. Like his daughter, he was ever after a firm believer in the divine mission of the Saviour of the world. On the day of his death, May 28th, 1843, in his eighty-fifth year, he repeated, with a radiant countenance, these triumphant words: "I know whom I have be-

lieved, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” It is my earnest prayer that, with this great lexicographer, you too, my dear friend, may be led to see that you can never be truly happy until, as lost and guilty, you confess your sins ; and not with an intellectual, but with a saving faith, “ BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.” Dr. Webster occupied thirty-six years in writing his dictionary ; but in his last hours, would he not rather a thousand times that these labors of a life-time should have perished, than to have lost his hope in Christ ?

When you, my dear reader, are called upon to bid adieu to the scenes of earth, what will all your treasure avail, if you have not an unfailing one laid up in heaven ? Oh ! I entreat you, lay to heart the lesson which this happy young Christian impressed so deeply upon the mind of her father ; namely, that when one with simple faith believes in Christ, the Holy Spirit changes his whole nature, and makes him far

happier in this world, and sure of happiness in the world to come. If you were only a follower of Jesus, you would find your heart cheered even amid the most depressing circumstances.

While in Scotland I met with an interesting illustration of this fact. I there frequently fell in with Mr. Duncan Matheson, a well-known evangelist, who did much for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the soldiers in the Crimean war. His cheerful, happy manner contributed to win sinners to Christ. I never used to tire of hearing him relate incidents in connection with his adventures in the East.

One night, as he was returning from before Sebastopol to his comfortless lodgings in a poor hut at Balaklava, and wading almost ankle-deep in mud, he lifted up his eyes, and viewed the bright, calm stars that shone overhead, and his soul soaring beyond them, he cheered his toilsome way by singing to a well-known tune the inspiring hymn beginning—

"How bright these glorious spirits shine!  
Whence all their white array?  
How came they to the blissful seats  
Of everlasting day?  
Lo! these are they from sufferings great,  
Who came to realms of light,  
And in the blood of Christ have washed  
Those robes which shine so bright."

Next day, as he was on his way to the trenches, he fell in with a poor soldier in miserable circumstances ; his clothing was meagre, tattered, and muddy, and his toes were sticking out at the side of his worn-out shoes.

Mr. Matheson asked in his frank way how he was getting on, and, seeing his wretched circumstances, gave him half-a-sovereign to buy a pair of shoes. The soldier replied, that although he was far from being well or comfortable in mind, he was much better than he was *yesterday*. This excited Mr. Matheson's curiosity, and he pressed him to tell why he was so excessively wretched *yesterday*, which he did with some hesitancy and apparent reluctance.

"As I thought," said the soldier, "of all we had passed through since we came out here, that we had been before this ugly place so long, and that we appeared as far from taking it as the first day we sat down before it, I was perfectly miserable, and could hardly be worse; death seemed preferable to life, and I resolved I would kill myself, and be done with it. I took up my musket, and went down there about eleven o'clock last night, and was making all ready to despatch myself, when a person I could not distinguish in the darkness passed down near me, wading through the mud, but apparently in a happy mood of mind, for he was singing—

'How bright these glorious spirits shine,' &c.,

to a tune with which I was familiar; and I said to myself, 'Well, now, this is very cowardly, for that man's circumstances are, no doubt, as bad as mine, and yet he seems to be happy;' but on listening to the words he was singing, I thought he must be in possession of a source of happiness, and have a

something to support him, to which I was quite a stranger. I wished I only knew how to be as happy as he was, and with that I put my musket under my arm and returned, and I feel better to-day, and more resolved to bear the worst."

How great was his surprise to be told that the singer who had charmed away from him the evil spirit of yesterday was now before him. "Was it you? Then I won't keep your half-sovereign; I won't keep it now, for your singing last night has given me much more than I can express." Mr. Matheson at once told him who was the source of his happiness, and related to him the story of the cross, and he stated to my friend, the Rev. W. Reid, author of that precious book, "The Blood of Jesus," that he had every reason to believe that this poor man gave himself to Christ.

Oh, my dear friend, if you have not "passed from death unto life," you ought to see that you yourself are "wretched and miserable." Oh, how mistaken the thought that you would

be less happy by selling a few fancied pleasures for infinite joys! When will you learn that

“The world can never give  
The bliss for which we sigh”

That you may be impressed with the truth of this, let me tell you of a certain king who was never seen to laugh or smile, but under all circumstances remained pensive and sad. His queen wondered at his conduct, for she thought if any one on earth had reason to be happy it was the king, her husband. She therefore requested a brother of his to ask him the cause of his continued sadness, and he did so.

The king replied that he would give him an answer the next day. In the meantime he caused a deep pit to be made, commanding his servants to fill it half full of fiery coals, and then to place over them rotten boards, which the weight of man might easily break. He then told them to set over the pit a table laden with all manner of luxuries.

When the brother came the next day for an answer to his question, the king led him, blinded, to this pit filled with the burning coals, and commanded him to be seated upon the trembling plank, beside the richly laden board. Men with drawn swords were stationed on all sides to prevent his escape. The best musicians in the realm were summoned to discourse the sweetest music.

Then the king caused the covering to be removed, and called to him, saying, "Rejoice and be merry, O my brother; eat, drink, enjoy this pleasant music; let your heart be filled with laughter. What more could you desire to make you glad?"

But he replied, "How can I be merry while surrounded with such dangers?"

"You see now," said the king, "the answer to your question. As it is now with thee, so it is always with me. My friends look upon the *luxuries* with which I am surrounded, while I see the *dangers* that encompass me. My sins are continually before me like armed men, and they seem to make it impossible

for me to escape from the endless torments of a burning hell which yawns beneath me, and wherein I must be cast if I die in my sins. Above me is suspended with a brittle thread the flaming sword of divine justice, which may at any moment pierce my heart. From all this I see no way of escape. How then can I be happy? How can I give myself up to music, feasting, and merriment? Do not wonder then that I continue sad and disconsolate."

If you, my impenitent friend, have not fled from the "WRATH TO COME" (Matt. iii. 7), then this is a faithful picture of your condition this very moment! Your sins will drive you down to that pit where "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever," unless, before it is too late, you flee to the loving Saviour, who has so pitied and loved us, that He has been willing to be "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah liii. 5); and who has given Himself "a ransom to deliver us from going down to the pit." (Job xxxiii. 24.)

That distressed king knew nothing of Christ's ability to "*save to the uttermost.*" But you have often heard of Jesus; why will you not then at once go to Him with all your burdens, and learn at the foot of the cross the sweet meaning of those words in 1 Peter i. 8? "*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*"

You will learn that He is able to change your heart, so that you will find pleasure in his service. Will you not then make use of this

### HYMN OF CONSECRATION.

Dear Saviour, now to Thee I turn  
From vanities of time:  
Thou know'st what thoughts within me burn  
To be a child of thine.

How oft, alas, I've sought for peace  
This spacious earth around;  
But all its joys are mixed with grief,  
True comfort nowhere found.

Oh! come and dwell within my heart,  
I'll open wide the door,

And never, never more depart;  
Thy goodness I'll adore.

I'll count it now my chiefest joy  
To know thy righteous will;  
And all my powers shall find employ,  
Thy pleasure to fulfil.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE SHINING PATH.

The shining path — Mrs. Mary Winslow: possesses all earth can give; not happy; led to Jesus; filled with joy — Different modes of introduction to the shining path — The contrast: not sudden joy, but peace — The cross “light as air” — Poetry.

**I**F it is a fact, as we have tried to show, that the followers of Jesus are far happier even in this life, is it not, to say the least, unwise to delay for a single day to enter that path, which is strewn with so many flowers, and which, the wise man says, is “as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

The experience of thousands has been, that all which this world can give will never satisfy the longings of our souls. The history of

Mrs. Mary Winslow, as narrated by her son, Dr. Octavius Winslow, whom I recently had the pleasure of meeting at his home in England, illustrated this truth.

At a ball one evening she received much attention, and her pride was gratified. She was then just married and surrounded with everything that could give earthly happiness ; but she was unhappy, and her unhappiness remained with her until she knew the Lord Jesus. “ On returning from the ball,” she says. “ I took a hasty review of the evening I had passed, as I lay upon my sleepless pillow. The glitter, the music, the dance, the excitement, the pleasure,— all passed before me ; but, oh ! I felt a want I could not describe. I sighed, and throwing my arms over my head, whispered to myself these expressive words, ‘ Is *this* all ? ’ I felt at the moment, that if this were all the happiness the world could bestow, then was there a lack I knew not how to supply, and a void I could not fill. I had reached the very summit of earthly bliss, and found it to fall short of what my heart craved,

and my soul required. From this time, I grew more fond of retirement, and less inclined to mingle with the gay world. I felt that what I had been pursuing in the early part of my life was not happiness. I turned from it with a sensation of loathing, and sought in solitude what I had never found in the brilliant and crowded walks of life. I thought that there must be a state where real happiness was to be found. In this condition I continued for years, striving to keep the law, and to shape my course by ‘the whole duty of man.’ I endeavored to walk so as to please God; but again and again my best resolutions were broken. These feelings I concealed from all around me; for I would not for the world have breathed a hint that I was unhappy to the dearest friend. I saw every one around me apparently happy in the possession of the world, which had lost its charm for me. I now sought peace of mind in domestic enjoyment. I was encircled by my children, possessed of a husband who anticipated my fondest wish. My heart sighed

for nothing of earthly bliss that I did not possess, and still I was unhappy. I was a sinner, and this secret conviction beclouded every prospect, and embittered every cup. Yes, I was unhappy—at times miserable; my very soul thirsted for what it had not, and yet I could not answer myself, and say what that one thing was.”

So great was her distress of mind, that her health gave way under the burdens that oppressed her.

Her husband was led to remove from his beautiful residence in Romford to London, hoping that the gayeties of a city life would dissipate her gloomy forebodings. Then, for the first time, she heard in simplicity the story of redeeming love. “This,” she says, “was what I wanted to know for many years—that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I was a poor sinner, and wanted to be saved. Oh! how eagerly I listened; I drank in every word. I had in vain been trying to work out my own salvation; but my works always fell short and left me

poor and miserable as ever. Now was held out to me the hope that I might be saved by another—the work of Jesus Christ.

“I returned to my Bible, and with it ventured me on the Lord, pleading his own gracious promise, ‘*Ask, and ye shall receive.*’ In an instant light broke in upon my soul; Jesus stood before me, and spoke those blessed words, ‘*I am thy salvation.*’ I hailed the glad tidings; my heart and soul responded; Jesus was with me! He had Himself spoken. I had seen the Lord, and heard his voice; the grave-clothes in which I had been so long confined fell off; my spirit was free, and I seemed to soar towards heaven in the sweetest, richest enjoyment; my heart was filled with a joy unspeakable!

“I arose from my knees to adore, and praise, and bless his holy name. Oh! what a night was that! never, never to be forgotten! I had seen Jesus. It was no vision of the bodily senses that I saw; but I had no more doubt that I was a redeemed and pardoned sinner—that I had seen Christ, and held

communion with Him who died that I might live—than I had of my own existence. It was with difficulty I could refrain from calling up the whole house, to hear what the Lord had done for my soul. It has since been evident to myself, that when the Holy Ghost gave me the promise to plead, He also gave me a measure of faith to credit God for its fulfilment; and, in answering the prayer of simple faith, Christ came into my soul with a full and free salvation, ‘*I am thy salvation!*’ This was good news indeed, fresh from heaven. Christ was mine; heaven was mine; all care and sorrow had vanished; and I was as happy as I could be in the body. I had found what I had long sought. I had been in search of real happiness for years, and in one night I had found it all in Jesus. God’s richest treasury had been thrown open to my view; and in Him I found all I wanted for time and eternity.”

Oh, what a dark, gloomy path was that trodden by Mrs. Winslow during those many years! How often did she regret that it took

her so long to learn that “The way of the wicked is as darkness!” Will you, my dear friend, persist in walking in that dark way, in danger every moment of stumbling into perdition, when there is so freely opened up a “shining path?”

I have just cast my eyes upon a letter written to me by a highly educated lady, which cannot but interest you, if you are asking, with Job (xxxviii. 19), “Where is the way where light dwelleth?” If you are truly anxious to find Him who says, “I am the way,” this account of the manner in which she was so quietly led into the “paths of peace” may help you. You will see that all are not filled with that sudden ecstatic joy which possessed the soul of Mrs. Winslow at the time she first received Christ.

The various fruits in a garden do not all ripen in the same month; so it is with the “fruits of the Spirit.” The delicate flower of peace sometimes, as with the writer of this letter, springs up and blossoms long before the ruddy plant of joy sends forth its green leaves and brilliant petals.

"I can scarcely remember the time when I did not want to love the Saviour, and long to be acknowledged his ; and, at different times, I tried to be a Christian, but could not, or rather did not succeed. I know the fault was my own. I believed everything that I knew a Christian should, but I did not feel it in my heart ; it was merely an intellectual belief. All things I kept closely to myself. No one had spoken to me. I shrank from any conversation on the subject.

"Last January we removed from Brooklyn to —. It was an entire change, in many ways, from the excitement of a city to the comparative quiet of a country life. But I liked it ; it gave me more time to think. Then I found among the people many warm friends. One of these did ask me if I was a Christian, and when I replied that I was not, led me to talk on the subject ; showed me the wonderful love of Christ in a light it had never appeared to me before. Still Christ seemed afar off, and I felt like one groping in the dark. But I had promised to try earn-

estly, and I sought to do so. It seemed to me that I did not feel deeply enough ; I was waiting for some great change to take place before I should become a Christian. Finally, this same good friend told me that, if I had *only a little feeling*, a *little love*, but had an earnest desire for more ; if I felt that I would give up all for Christ ; if I was ready to serve Him, and to live for Him, more feeling would come, and more love. And I did then, I think, give myself to Christ, feeling my own weakness, my sinfulness, and unworthiness, but trying to trust Him, trying to rely on his promises, and to believe they were for me. So the sudden violent change never came ; but a kind hand lifted the curtain that had hidden my Saviour's face, and I saw Him more willing to receive me than I to come ; loving, gentle, patient, long-suffering, forgiving.

“ I hesitated a long time before I could venture to unite myself with the church, fearing, yet anxious to do it. At length, trusting ‘ Him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of

his glory with exceeding joy,' I became in name what I hoped I had already become in heart — one of Christ's people ; and lo ! the very responsibility I had so much dreaded, gave me courage, and that which had seemed a burden proved lighter than air. Now nearly four months have passed since that time, and though I have often doubted, often been perplexed, often feared I should disgrace his cause, or grieve his love, still through it all, I have been happier than ever before in having Christ's help to live, hoping that at last, having ended temptations, having been tried, I may receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him."

You see this lady made up her mind not to wait for some great change, or for more feeling, but simply to " give up all for Christ" — ready to serve Him, and to live for Him. This, my dear friend, if you are not yet a Christian, is all you have to do.

Then, in the confident and joyful words of Charlotte Elliott, authoress of that sweet

hymn, “Just as I am,” blessed to so many thousand, you can sing—

“Oh Holy Saviour, friend unseen,  
The faint, the weak on Thee may lean;  
Help me, throughout life’s varying scene,  
By faith to cling to Thee!

“Blest with communion so divine,  
Take what Thou wilt, shall I repine,  
When, as the branches to the vine,  
My soul may cling to Thee?

“Far from her home, fatigued, oppressed,  
Here she has found a place of rest;  
An exile still, yet not unblest,  
While she can cling to Thee!

“Without a murmur I dismiss  
My former dreams of earthly bliss;  
My joy, my recompense be this,  
Each hour to cling to Thee!

“What though the world deceitful prove,  
And earthly friends and joy remove,  
With patient, uncomplaining love,  
Still would I cling to Thee!

“Oft when I seem to tread alone  
Some barren waste, with thorns o’ergrown,  
A voice of love, in gentlest tone,  
Whispers, ‘ Still cling to Me!’

“Though faith and hope awhile be tried,  
I ask not, need not, aught beside;





How safe, how calm, how satisfied,  
The soul that clings to Thee!

“They fear not life’s rough storms to brave,  
Since Thou art near, and strong to save;  
Nor shudder e’en at death’s dark wave,  
Because they cling to Thee!

“Blest is my lot, whate’er befall;  
What can disturb me, who appall;  
While, as my strength, my rock, my **all**,  
Saviour, I cling to Thee! ”

## CHAPTER IV.

### WHY NOT ENTER THE SHINING PATH?

Wisdom to enter the better life; not too young—The peaceful invalid—The present enjoyment—“What a fool I have been to reject Christ”—a remarkable experience; “Christ has hold of me”—Dr. Edward Payson’s sadness and joy—Spurgeon’s experience—“I am so happy; Jesus has washed all my sins away”—Prayer.

**I**F this new life be indeed the *better life*, is it not folly to live on without at once entering upon its enjoyments?

Perhaps you say, “Oh, I am too young to be a Christian now; I will wait till I am older.” But have not the previous chapters shown you that religion is for this world, as well as for the world to come; that God’s word is true when it declares that “*godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*”

Besides, you do not know when you may be called to bid adieu to the scenes of earth. Not long since, I was called to the bedside of a girl of fourteen summers, who was near to her journey's end. When but about ten years of age I had seen her, with scores of others, weeping for her sins, and shortly after rejoicing in the assurance, that for Christ's sake they were all forgiven. It was not, then, a fear of death that led her to seek for a new heart as a preparation for heaven. She simply saw how much Jesus had loved her, in giving Himself to die in her stead, and how very ungrateful and wicked she had been not to love Him in return ; and with tears she besought the dear Saviour to forgive and to help her by his Holy Spirit to trust Him, and to make her his own happy, loving, obedient child. Her prayer was at once answered, as every such prayer always will be ; and now, when called to die, she had no alarms.

I shall never forget the joyful expression which lit up her countenance, as we sang to her the hymn—

"A beautiful land by faith I see,  
A land of rest from sorrow free;  
The home of the ransomed bright and fair,  
And beautiful angels, too, are there."

Though it is right for you to remember that you, too, must die, still I would not have you think of this as the one great reason why you should become a Christian ; for if you do this, you will, I fear, as too many have done, put it off until death comes unawares upon you, and summons you away unprepared to the judgment-bar of God. I would have you feel that, even were there no heaven and no hell, it is most unwise not to serve God while life lasts. Our highest faculties, those from whose exercise we derive the purest enjoyment, are not developed until we enter upon this *better life*.

You, with thousands of others, will find these words full of truth, if you will, as a lost and guilty sinner, come to Jesus.

How true you will find his words in John xiv. 6 : "I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE!"

I find among my papers a most interesting letter from a young man in New Jersey, whose experience answers the opening question of this chapter. His plain words are, "*What a fool I have been to reject Christ so long!*"

If his only object in becoming a Christian had been to secure a title for heaven, I think he would hardly have used this language. He does not say, "What a fool I have been to give up all my worldly pleasures for the dull, morose life of a Christian!" Did you ever hear any one use such words? Never! Multitudes have, with tears and groans, lamented that they delayed making their peace with God till it was too late; but who ever heard of one expressing regret at having become a Christian, even though he lived three-quarters of a century after having received Jesus as his "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption?"

This young man writes: "I was attracted to your meetings in the first Baptist church merely out of curiosity, as I would have gone to the theatre to see some new star, or to the

opera to hear some new prima donna. I first took a seat with my wife in the gallery near the stairs, thinking that perhaps I would not like the performance, and I would be handy to get out.

"I was deeply interested in the discourse, which was made up of simple, plain truths, and I could understand them; and all that was said appeared to apply to my case. After the sermon I remained, and was much amused at looking down at the inquirers, and the different ministers and Christians, as they went about speaking to different ones; and I remarked to my wife that we had better go, as most of the ministers knew me, and if they saw me, they would be coming up and speaking to me, and I did not want any of them buzzing about me.

"As I was attentively watching the proceedings downstairs, some one tapped me on the shoulder. I looked up, and a young Christian friend of mine was standing there. I shook hands with him, and he asked me how I was? I said, 'Pretty well.' He said,

‘ You mean, perhaps, that you are well in body ? ’ I said, ‘ Certainly.’ He then said, ‘ How is it in reference to your soul’s welfare ? ’ I told him that I had not given that matter much attention. He asked me if it was not time I was thinking about the matter ? I told him, perhaps it was. After a few more kind words he left.

“ I went home feeling pretty badly. The next day I felt worse, and during the day I tried several times to get rid of my bad feelings by cracking some joke, or taking a drink ; but it was of no use, as that only made me feel worse. The next evening I did not get to the church till after the singing. Meeting had commenced, and I walked right up the middle aisle, and took a seat. I began to realize that I was a poor sinner, and I felt miserable. Several ministers and Christians talked to me, yourself among the number, and one or two wished me to go home and pray : but I did not promise to, and did not.

“ The next evening I had an engagement

of a political nature, and all the time that I spent at the meeting I felt miserable. I was forced to reply in a debate that was before the meeting, and I got up and utterly failed in the attempt, sat down ashamed of myself, and called on some one to take my place ; and I got excused, not to go home — no : but to go to your Inquiry Meeting. As soon as I entered the church, I sought out Dr. Fish, and told him I wished him to pray with us. Just then you extended an invitation to all those who had not been converted and prayed with to come to a given part of the house. I got my wife, and we took a front seat. You made a few remarks, and then asked us all to get down on our knees. I hesitated a second, as I never had been on my knees, that I could recollect ; but I got down, and we repeated the prayer after you.

“I started for home feeling miserable, and when I came to the last crossing, I was agitating in my mind how I should get up the steps ; it seemed as if I never had such a load to carry. As soon as I had reached my room,

I told my wife I must get down and pray. We did so, and my prayer was, that Jesus would take me just as I was — a poor, miserable sinner. As soon as I laid my head on my pillow, it seemed as if I could hear them singing, ‘Come to Jesus, just now,’ and ‘Happy day, happy day.’ I went to sleep in that frame of mind.

“ When I awoke the next morning, I cannot describe what my feelings were ; I was entirely a different man. It was quite early. The first thing I thought of doing was to pray. I told my wife so. She said it was too early to get up. I told her I did not care how early it was, I must get up and pray. We did so, and when we sat down to the breakfast table, I asked a blessing.

“ I can assure you that I have had more pleasure in one hour than I had in all my life-time before, and I have often thought *what a fool I have been to reject Jesus so long!*

“ I thank Jesus daily that you came, and pointed me to my Saviour, who has pardoned my sins, and made me happy. I now love to

be in the prayer-meeting, and among Christians, and engaged in all good works.

"From your Christian friend,

"\_\_\_\_\_"

It is now four years since this letter was written, and the writer is still a happy, earnest Christian. Another letter from the same young man has recently been received, and I have reason to know from others that every word of this last letter is true. I give an extract in the hope that it may encourage you, my dear friend, to believe that God is able to help those who give themselves up to Christ, to live consistent and devoted lives.

I remember that Dr. Mark Hopkins, of Williams' College, once told the students of two men who were conversing about their evidence of their hope in the Lord Jesus. When the first was asked how he knew he was a Christian, his answer was:

"Because I have hold of Christ."

"But," said the other, "what will you do if the devil cuts off your hands?"

This staggered him. “Well,” said he, “how do you know that you are a Christian?”

“Oh,” he replied, “CHRIST HAS HOLD OF ME, and the devil can’t cut his hands off.”

So, if you, too, will but come and believe in Him who suffered untold agonies on Calvary’s cross for you, saying:

“Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve  
Because thy promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come!

“Just as I am—thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down;  
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come!”

you will then hear the loving, compassionate Saviour’s words, “I WILL NEVER LEAVE THEE.” (Heb. xiii. 5.)

Read this second letter, and see if this young man does not seem to be one of those “who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.” (1 Peter i. 5.)

“If it had not been for the outpouring of

the Spirit last spring in this city, perhaps I should have still been travelling the downward path to hell. But, thanks be to a kind providence, I can say to-day that I am a Christian. You, perhaps, may say, "How do you know that you are a Christian?" I can soon tell you. I love those things I used to hate, and hate those things I used to love. I love the prayer-meetings, and the society of Christians. I am superintendent of a mission school, and the Lord is blessing that school. It is situated about two miles from my home; but I am always there, rain or shine, and always feel refreshed after the duties of the school are performed.

"It is a pleasant duty, dear brother! Only think of the gay, careless——being engaged in such a work as this! Most certainly the Lord has been good to me. I am also connected with the 'Young Men's Christian Union,' which is, I think, doing a great work, in holding meetings, and distributing tracts and books. So, you see, I am not idle. *I feel that I wish to be doing something for Jesus all*

*the time.* I feel that I am growing in grace, and that I have more and more every day to thank the Lord for."

I have often seen the writer of these letters standing up, with two thousand others, and singing with a joyful heart —

"The Lord has pardoned all my sin,  
That's the news!  
I feel the witness now within,  
That's the news!  
And since he took my sins away,  
And taught me how to watch and pray,  
I'm happy now from day to day—  
That's the news; that's the news!"

Oh! that every unsaved reader might heed, before it is too late, the entreaty,

"And Christ, the Lord, can save you now,  
That's the news!  
Your sinful heart He can renew,  
That's the news!  
This moment, if for sins you grieve,  
This moment, if you do believe,  
A full acquittal you'll receive,  
That's the news; that's the news!"

A little more than a year after this young

man experienced this happy change of heart, while acting as a delegate to the Young Men's Christian Commission in Philadelphia, in May, 1862, he was taken dangerously sick. It was my privilege to stand by his bedside, and to witness his calm confidence in God. He had no fears of death; he knew that, whenever called hence, he could exclaim with Paul, "to depart and be with Christ is far better."

He told me that his great regret was that he had lost so much true enjoyment in not having in childhood given his heart to the Lord. "You see," this young man says, "I have, since I became a Christian, had more pleasure in one hour than in all my lifetime before," and there is no reason why he should not continue in this joyful state of mind. It is both his privilege and his duty, since it is written. "**REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAY.**"

"This world is a waste, howling wilderness to those alone who go howling through it;" but

“The hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets  
Before we reach the sacred fields,  
Or walk the golden streets.”

It is, alas! too true that not a few real Christians often yield to despondency. But it is their own fault if they go half starved, when there is a free, royal feast constantly spread for them.

I have often felt that the memoir of the sainted Payson has done much to discourage its unconverted readers from Christ's service.

Their argument has been, that if one so holy and so much blessed of God in the conversion of souls was so often depressed, then they may infer that increased piety brings with it increased sorrow. But they do not consider that the morbid state of mind which occasionally troubled him so much, was owing rather to his physical than to his spiritual condition.

“Christians,” he says, “might avoid much trouble if they would only believe that God is

able to make them happy without anything else. They imagine that if such a dear friend were to die, or such and such blessings to be removed, they would be miserable, whereas God can make them a thousand times happier without them. To mention my own case: God has deprived me of one blessing after another; but as every one has been removed, He has come in and filled up its place; and now, when I am a cripple, and not able to move; I am happier than ever I was in my life before, or ever expect to be. If I had only believed this twenty years ago, I might have been spared much anxiety.”

Dr. Edward Payson is not the only one who has been slow to learn this important lesson. I have sometimes thought that one reason why God in mercy fills the hearts of young converts with such “joy unspeakable,” at the very outset of their religious course, is to teach them that He alone is the fountain of delights, and that if they will “follow on to know the Lord,” they will find, by happy experience, the meaning of those words in Job

xvii. 9, "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."

In speaking of his own experience, Mr. Spurgeon says: "Now we believe and know the king's highway to be a path of peace. We had heard the vile calumny, that religion was a thing of misery and sadness, and that its followers were the companions of owls and lamentations; but the jubilant hour of our reception into the house of the saints laid bare the deception, and discovered the reverse of our gloomy appreciations. We were 'led forth with peace;' where we feared a wilderness we found a Sharon, and the oil of joy was given to us instead of the expected mourning. It's no use for the infidel to tell us now our way will not end in bliss; it began with it, and we are compelled to believe that, if the same Jesus be Alpha and Omega too, the end must be eternal happiness."

Among a pile of letters, I find another testimony from a young lady in Canada, which I am sure you cannot read without feeling most

deeply that you are, even in your daily experience, a loser in not yielding yourself to Him who alone can make you truly happy. You will observe, she says, in speaking of that joy she felt when she first entered the path of life, “ Oh, how I wished all were partakers of the same happiness ! ”

“ Oh, I am so happy ! for Jesus has heard my prayer, and washed my sins away ; and my constant desire is —

“ Oh ! what shall I do my Saviour to praise,  
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace,  
So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,  
The weakest believer that hangs upon Him ! ”

Oh ! how I wish all were partakers of this same happiness, especially young persons of my own age !

“ Wherever you may go, tell the young that Jesus has made a promise to them He never made to older persons ; it is this — ‘ They that seek me early shall find me. ’ Tell them to yield at once, and to give up all for Christ, who died for them ! that He is waiting to re-

ceive them; for Jesus never yet, nor ever will, cast out a truly penitent one who comes to Him seeking for pardon.

I wish to give you some account of my conversion. I did not remain for any inquiry meeting until Friday night. I was spoken to by kind Christians who were anxious for my eternal welfare, but it appeared to have no effect on me. I am afraid I was not as much in earnest as I should have been. On returning home I began to see what a wicked, rebellious creature I was, and that unless *my heart was changed*, I never could stand before the great white throne of God as one of the glorified saints. On Saturday I attended the children's meeting. You conversed and prayed with me, and I attempted to pray myself, but it seemed as though I could not. On Sunday I was awake long before daylight; sleep had fled from my eyes, and I felt more miserable than ever; in spite of all my efforts, I could scarce refrain from weeping, even *while Jesus was waiting to receive me just then*, but I would not come, neither did I know my own heart.

"Before I started to attend the afternoon meeting, I opened my Bible, and the first passage of Scripture that attracted my attention was this, 'If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.' I knelt right down and prayed that Jesus would take me just as I was, and make me His. I felt I could trust Him who had died in my stead, and that very moment, I believe I was saved."

When I was in Jerusalem I visited, with deep interest, the place where it is believed Christ was arraigned before Pilate. I thought of how the infuriated mob cried, "*Away with Him, crucify Him!*" and of how "*the soldiers platted a crown of thorns and put it on his head,*" and of how "*they smote him on the head with a reed,*" and did spit upon Him, and of how He was scourged till the blood ran down his back. I cannot tell you what emotion filled my heart as I realized more deeply than I had ever done before what terrible tortures Jesus had endured for me. Oh my dear unsaved friend, have *you really thought of what Jesus did for you?* Oh come with me and

In Pilate's Hall behold  
The blessed Saviour bound;  
His marble brow all deathly cold,  
With thorns He there is crowned.

Draw near to Him, I pray,  
He's wounded there for *thee*;  
Oh do not turn from Him away,  
List to that mockery.

Oh! see those cruel stripes  
Upon His back all bare,  
See from His bleeding brow He wipes  
The blood that trickles there.

That blood was shed for thee,  
For thee 'twas freely spilt,  
From all thy sins to set thee free,  
And cleanse away thy guilt.

He died that thou mightst live,  
Oh! come and trust Him now,  
He'll freely all thy sins forgive,  
And clothe with peace thy brow.

Now say— Oh Lord!—I pray,  
For Jesus' sake alone,  
Take all my guilt and sins away,  
And make me all thine own.

What now, my dear friend is *your* decision ?  
Every page of this book has been written with  
the most earnest prayer that it might be  
blessed by the Holy Spirit in leading the

blinded at last to enter, through faith in Christ, upon a life of happiness. Will not you, then, seek some place of retirement, and bow down before God and offer this

PRAYER ?

Teach me, O Lord, the folly of living in ignorance of Thee and of thy service. Show me how entirely “the god of this world hath blinded my mind.” If, indeed, thou hast taught me to some extent the bitterness of sin, I thank Thee. But Oh! “cast me not away from thy presence: take not thy Holy Spirit from me.” Wilt Thou help me to “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Help me to cry with saving faith, “Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief.” My dear Redeemer, when I think of thy bloody sweat in the garden, of thy cruel buffetings, scourgings in Pilate’s Hall, and the crucifixion on Calvary, which Thou in love and compassion didst endure for me, a guilty and condemned sinner, that I might be pardoned, and made, by the Spirit, a new creature, capable of enjoying thy service here on earth, and thy blissful pres-

ence in heaven for ever ; oh ! when I think of all this, how can I help but love Thee ! Oh ! what a hard heart I have had to live so long neglecting and rejecting Thee !

Help me henceforth to live for Thee, and to make it my meat and drink to do thy will.

Dear Saviour, Thou knowest how

“ I have sought the world around,  
Paths of sin and folly trod,  
But true comfort nowhere found ; ”

but now I turn to Thee as “ the chiefest among ten thousand.” Take me, and make me thine forever more. Amen.

## CHAPTER V.

### LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

Nicodemus — Augustine's words — Remarkable conversion of a Jewish actor; subsequent history; preaches the gospel — Not to *see* but *look* — “There is life for a look at the crucified One.”

**A**S Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

“ There is LIFE for a look at the crucified One,  
There is life at this moment for thee;  
Then look, sinner, look unto HIm and be saved  
Unto Him who was nailed to the tree ! ”

Yes, you *may* look unto Jesus this very hour, and be saved. He has been lifted up on

the cross for sinners like you. He saw your condition, a guilty and condemned sinner, and of his own love and free will purchased by the sacrifice of Himself your pardon. Do you feel that, if you would enter on the BETTER LIFE, and continue to walk in it, a great change must be wrought upon you? Do you realize the all-important truth which Christ again and again pressed upon Nicodemus? Have you heard a voice from heaven saying unto you, “Ye must be born again?” Then the words at the head of this chapter tell you how this transformation in your nature can be effected. They tell you how to find this BETTER LIFE which you profess to be seeking.

Are you, with the words of John Newton, in sorrow saying—

“Oh! could I but believe,  
Then all would easy be;  
I would, but cannot, Lord, believe;  
My help must come from Thee?”

If these are your feelings, and you thus cast yourself upon Jesus, and lean only upon Him,

trusting not to your own feelings, but simply on what CHRIST HAS DONE FOR YOU AS A SINNER, then it will not be long before you will sing—

“Oh, how sweet to view the flowing  
Of his soul's redeeming blood;  
With divine assurance knowing  
That HE MADE MY PEACE WITH GOD.”

You will then find the words of Augustine true: “Thou mayest seek after honors, and not obtain them; thou mayest labor for riches, and yet remain poor; thou mayest dote on pleasure, and have many sorrows. But Jesus in love and mercy says, “Whoever sought *me*, and found me not? Whoever desired *me*, and obtained me not? I am with him that seeks me. He that loveth Me is sure of my love.”

In the summer of 1864, I met with a most interesting and remarkable case of the conversion of a Jew, who was by profession an actor in a theatre, but has since become a minister of the gospel. It illustrates forcibly what has just been said. It is my prayer that

God may use it to help you to look unto Jesus, and to be saved.

At the close of a meeting in Dr. Patterson's church, there stood before me a young man whose features plainly marked him as a descendant of Abraham. I soon found him to be under deep conviction of sin. God had taught him by his Holy Spirit, that he must "give an account of the deeds done in the body." His anxious words were:

"What shall I do? I cannot spend another such night as the last. I can't live with such a burden upon me."

"Do! do!" said I; "what can you do but simply trust in the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"But what has He done for me?" he asked.

"He has done everything for you.

"When He from his lofty throne  
Stooped to do and die,  
Everything was fully done:  
"Tis finished!" was his cry.

"Till to Jesus' work you cling  
By a simple faith,  
Doing is a deadly thing,  
Doing ends in death."

‘ But,’ said he, ‘ my father was a Jew, and I was educated in the city of London for a Rabbi. I have been taught that Jesus, the despised Jew of Nazareth, was an impostor.’

‘ But,’ said I, ‘ He is not an imposter, He is the Saviour of sinners. He died on Calvary’s cross, an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. And you must believe in Him, or you can never get rid of that burden ; but, sooner or later, it will come upon you again. The only thing for you to do is to cast it at the foot of the cross.’

‘ But I am a Jew, and I can never believe in Jesus of Nazareth.’

‘ You must, or die the second death.’

‘ But I don’t know how ; I can’t believe in what I don’t understand. I have been taught to hate Jesus Christ ; and can I, all at once, believe in Him, and love Him, as you do ? ’

‘ Not without help from God,’ I answered, ‘ and for that reason you must pray.’

‘ Oh, if praying will make me feel any better, I am willing to pray all day.’

As there were but two or three left in the

church, I asked, "Are you willing to kneel down here now, and pray, after I have first prayed for you? Will you, too, pray out loud?"

"Yes," he replied, quickly; "I will do anything rather than live in this way."

With tears and trembling he uttered this petition: "O Thou God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, if Jesus of Nazareth be the long-promised Messiah, help me to believe in Him and be saved."

But I find in my note-book, in this converted Jew's own hand-writing, a more complete account than I can give from memory. I am sure it will interest you; I can scarcely read it without tears of gratitude to God.

"After having spent the night of Saturday, May 22nd, in dissipation and sin, I arose from my bed feeling very sick, and very miserable. Walking leisurely up Madison Street, my attention was arrested by hearing strains of sacred music coming from a church. I was led to enter the church, not to pray, but to hear the singing, and to while away the hour.

After the singing had ceased the minister rose, and in the course of his remarks said that all his hearers were dying creatures. And not only had they to die, but also had they to render to God an account for the deeds done in the body.

"These plain truths came with a peculiar power to my mind. I, too, *must die*. I, too, must 'give an account of the deeds done in the body.' I left the church a miserable conscience-condemned sinner. For many years I had lived without God, catering for the amusement of Satan's children. Truly, I had been very wicked, and I felt it. I returned to my room, tried to divert my mind away from thinking over the subject; but still the thought would return, I, *too, must die*; I, too, must 'give an account of the deeds done in the body.'

"I passed a sleepless night — nay, more, a wretched night. I arose early on Monday morning, and, looking over the daily paper, found that the Rev. Mr. Hammond was to speak in a church at the corner of Wabash Ave-

nue and Washington Street. Thither I went, hoping to hear something to remove the terrible feeling from my mind. When I reached the church the meeting was over. A gentleman seeing me standing, looking painfully disappointed, took the liberty to ask me why I looked so sad. I told him that I felt unhappy and unholy, and that I would like to see Mr. H. He gave me an introduction to him, who kindly took me by the hand, asking me what troubled me? I told him my feelings, that I felt myself a sinner before God, and a very wicked one, too. He prayerfully pointed me to *Jesus*, and told me *I must look to Him; for He only could save me, and make me happy.* This I could not understand. My parents had taught me that Jesus was an impostor; and when Mr. H. spoke of my looking to Jesus, I felt much more troubled. Mr. H. asked me to kneel in prayer. I did so; but when he prayed to Jesus, I felt angry. I thought that I, a Jew, had no business in a Christian church, praying to Jesus. Mr. H. still prayed on, but I could not understand the matter.

I tried to pray, too, but hardly knew what I said. Time being precious, and Mr. H. having to leave, he introduced me to Mr. Moody, and some other Christian friends, asking them to speak to me, and to pray with and for me. Accordingly Mr. M. read a part of Luke's gospel, but still no light. He then read the third chapter of John's gospel ; he came to the 14th verse, " As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up ; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This blessed truth seemed to reach my heart. I knew that Moses had lifted up a serpent in the wilderness. My father had told me that *that* was true, but what had Christ to do with it ? I could not see any resemblance between Christ and the serpent. But I took the matter to God, and there in that church, with my head bowed down in humility before Him, I sincerely asked the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to teach me if it was true. God mercifully heard my prayer, and in a moment showed me Jesus of Nazareth on the cross.

Yes ; I saw the whole mystery. Our fore-fathers looked to the serpent, and were healed ; so I must look believably to Christ, and be healed of my sins. I did look, and glory to God ! I was happy, oh, how happy. I arose from my knees, saying, ‘I see it ; I see it.’ And not only did I see it, but I felt it. Glory to God ! Glory to Christ ! Wonderful Jesus ! Blessed Jesus ! My Jesus ! My Saviour, I love Thee ! Thou art my all in all. O blessed Saviour, keep me humble, and may I never forget that Thou wast lifted up for me.”

“E. C. R.”

His subsequent history has proved that he did indeed at that hour look to Christ with saving faith — that, at that very time, he was of a truth “born again” by the Spirit of God. His soul was at once filled with such ecstatic joy, that he could not but speak to others of the precious Saviour. As he passed out to the street, he met a Jewish acquaintance, whom he at once addressed with the joyful words.

“Mr. Abraham, Jesus of Nazareth is the long promised Messiah!” •as if he had made a most marvellous discovery, and one that even his brother Israelite would hail with delight. But what reply did he get in return? Mr. Abraham became immediately so enraged, that, with a clenched fist, he knocked him down, and there left him.

Shortly after he met an old theatrical companion, who, seeing a new Bible in the convert’s hand, asked, “What’s that — a new edition of Shakespeare?”

“No; it’s the Bible!”

“The Bible! What are *you* doing with the Bible? and what’s that singing book — Christy’s Minstrels?”

“No,” was the answer; “it’s the REVIVAL MELODIST.”

“‘Revival Melodist’! Why you are going crazy: come along and take a drink, and drink away all this foolish nonsense.”

“Oh, no; I am not crazy; I’ve just come to my right mind; I’ve found Jesus. I am not going to act any more on the stage; I am

going to live for Him who died on the cross for me."

He has made good this declaration. He has since graduated in a Presbyterian theological seminary, and is now pastor of a church in Illinois; and I see, by the "*New York Independent*," that the Holy Spirit has been blessing his labors in the conversion of sinners.

If you will read the following extract from a letter which he wrote me recently, you will see what he thinks of this "better life," and the Saviour who is so safely and tenderly guiding him through it.

" You ask if I am still clinging to Jesus ? Yes, dear brother ; to whom else can I cling ? None like Jesus. Blessed Jesus ! Since first I saw Him, He has loved me. He loved me before, but I did not heed it. He is my truest Friend. He has never left me, nor forsaken me. How many have changed since I saw you, but Jesus never. The same Jesus yesterday, the same blessed Jesus to-day, and, I hope, forever. It is strange that men will not

love Him. What more can He say, what more can He do, than He has done for them ? Oh ! if they only knew Him, his love for souls, his willingness to bless them and make them happy, they would not, they could not, help but love Him. Tell the people that the poor Jew asks them to love the blessed Saviour, the sinner's only Friend.”

You see then, dear friend, what a look at the crucified One did for this blind Jew. It will do the same for you. He at first, you remember, at one time, seemed to think that praying would relieve him ; but he found that was not enough, and that he must look with the eyes of faith to the Saviour on the cross, bleeding, dying, for him. Jesus' words are, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved.” (Isa. xlvi. 22.) He does not command you to *see*, but to *look* ; and, as you seek to *look*, He, with his mighty power, will help you to *see* ; and, with this son of Abraham, you will cry, “I see it ! I see it !” Yes, you will see the great plan of salvation all made plain, and you will wonder that you could have lived so long, and





been blind to all its beauties — blind to the condescending love of the dear Redeemer.

Will you not then, with a prayerful heart, look to Jesus just now? and you will find to the joy of your heart that,

"There is life for a look at the crucified One,

There is life at this moment for thee:

Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved —

Unto Him who was nailed to the tree!

"Oh! why was He there as the bearer of sin,

If on Jesus thy sins were not laid?

Oh! why from his side flowed the sin-cleansing blood,

If his dying thy debt has not paid?

"It is not thy tears of repentance nor prayers,

But the BLOOD that atones for the soul;

On Him, then, who shed it thou mayst at once

Thy weight of iniquities roll.

"We are healed by his stripes; wouldest thou add to the Word?

And He is our righteousness made:

The best robe of heaven He bids thee put on;

Oh! couldst thou be better arrayed?

"Then doubt not thy welcome, since God has declared

There remaineth no more to be done;

That once in the end of the world He appeared,

And completed the work He begun.

"But take, with rejoicing, from Jesus at once

The life everlasting He gives;

And know, with assurance, thou never canst die,  
Since Jesus thy righteousness, lives.

"There is life for a look at the crucified One,  
There is life at this moment for thee;  
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,  
And know thyself spotless as He."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE WAY TO BE SAVED.

A visit to Vesuvius—The defeat of the Capuans—Rebellion against God—The love of Christ—The just suffers for the unjust—The story of Tigranes—A remarkable conversion—John Newton—Child's prayer.

HILE writing this book, I have often lifted my heart to God in prayer, for the guidance of his Holy Spirit, to teach me what words to use in seeking to lead you to the Saviour.

My one great object has been, that you might know the joy of sins forgiven.

I have sought by various illustrations and examples to show you what a blessed thing it is to be a follower of Jesus. It is now my earnest desire that you should not finish this

chapter without accepting Christ as your Saviour. He alone can make you truly happy. As you have read these pages, have you in prayer asked God to show you the way of salvation through Christ? If you have not, I entreat you not to read another page without at once falling on your knees, and asking God, for Christ's sake to have mercy on you. He will make your way plain to you. He will help you to understand all that I shall say about the "finished work of Christ."

Your everlasting happiness depends on your having a saving acquaintance with what Christ has done for you, in giving Himself an atoning sacrifice for the sin of the world. Oh, then, I entreat you to listen while I address you in words which I have before used, in seeking to lead souls to Jesus.

One beautiful afternoon, in the spring of 1861, in company with an officer from the *Exmouth*, an English man-of-war lying in the bay of Naples, we ascended to the smoking top of Vesuvius. The marvellous sight from the summit o' that volcano, nearly four thou-

sand feet high, more than repaid us for all our trouble. At times we were so fortunate as to be able to look to the very bottom of the burning cauldron ; it was an awful sight. As the sulphurous smoke enveloped us, we could but think of those fearful words, “The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.” (Rev. xiv. 11.) Some profane sailors from the man-of-war, who chanced to be present, stood gazing down into what seemed to be a “bottomless pit.” One of them was overheard to say, “Well, Jack, I have always tried to think there was no such place as hell, but all this makes me fear there may be.” The solemn answer came : “*I*, too, am afraid there is.”

While looking down into that seething abyss, where three German students, venturing too near the edge, had but a little time before plunged into the red-hot lava to rise no more, there was a fearful eruption. A stream of burning lava and half-melted rocks was sent with gigantic force into the air. We all ran for our lives. The whole mountain seemed to quake with fear, and I am sure some of us

did. We looked to see some crevice open beneath our feet.

We were glad to get away from that too suggestive and alarming sight. We started out from Naples on a pleasure excursion. We did not love to harbor thoughts about “THE LAKE OF FIRE” and “THE SECOND DEATH.” And so, when our Italian guide called us to eat eggs boiled in the hot lava, we gladly accepted, and turned our eyes away to the charming bay of Naples, with its green islands basking in the golden rays of the declining sun. Down that mountain’s side, below the line of lava, were the fragrant, many-tinted flowers; and we thought of the “land of Beulah,” the “sea of glass,” and we could not help singing that hymn we had learned to love in America :

“The men of grace have found  
Glory begun below;  
Celestial fruits on earthly ground  
From faith and hope may grow.

“The hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets,  
Before we reach the heavenly fields,  
Or walk the golden streets.”

Thus, on the outer edge of the crater, we sat, gazing for a long time on the wondrous panorama spread out before us. A little to our left lay the excavated ruins of Pompeii, that voluptuous Roman city, destroyed, like Sodom and Gomorrah, by "brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. (Gen.xix. 24.) The day before we had visited a house in that doomed city, where had been found a skeleton of a man, by whose side lay a wire basket filled with three hundred and sixty pieces of gold and silver. He, with the thousands who escaped, saw the danger, heard the ominous rumblings of the overhanging sulphurous mountain, but, not willing to leave his gold, *lost his life*. Oh, what a sermon that was to us! For seventeen hundred years the book containing that solemn warning to the careless had been closed. That whole city, for so many centuries buried beneath ashes and lava, was, indeed, an open book, *full* of such sermons and warnings.

To the right of us lay Capua, where Spartacus with seventy companions, in the servile

war, broke loose from the gladiatorial school of Lentulus. With the aid of a glass we could see the ruins of the amphitheatre, built of tiles and faced with white marble.

My dear reader, I have spread out these scenes before you that I might the more vividly call your attention to an interesting event which occurred in Capua about 211 b. c.

Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, had, with his great army, invaded Italy for the purpose of subjugating Rome. This he found a difficult work. In order to accomplish it, he saw the necessity of inducing some of her allies to revolt. The Capuans, on the banks of the Volturno, little by little yielded to his overtures. Capua is supposed to have been at that time a larger and more wealthy city than Rome itself. When, therefore, this wily African general proposed to the Capuans to make their city the capital of Italy, on condition that they would join his armies and march against the proud "city of the seven hills," they were easily led to join his standard. How little they knew of the fearful

retribution they “were treasuring” up for themselves! But their delusions were soon dispelled. Hannibal, even with the aid of his allies from the fertile banks of the Volturno, was not able to vanquish the resolute Romans. Instead of capturing the Roman capital, the men of Capua ere long heard the consuls Fulvius and Claudio thundering at their gates, and demanding instant surrender. At length they were forced to yield. Capua, alas too late! shed bitter tears of repentance, when she saw fifty-three of her honored senators led forth to an ignominous death, thirteen hundred of her nobles shut up in dungeons, and the bulk of her citizens torn away from the familiar haunts of home, with its endearing associations, and sold for slaves. As the citizens turned their lingering looks on the once proud metropolis of the Campagna, they saw nought to gladden their eyes; for the sad thought was forced upon them, that they were doomed to a life of slavery, and that a Roman prefect ruled over their once-loved city.

My dear reader, God has a government ad-

ministered by righteous laws. These laws were instituted for the happiness of his creatures. They were, in other words, a rule of action, which, if followed out, would have resulted in peace and harmony between the beneficent Ruler of the universe and his subjects. But, alas ! this part of God's dominions in which we live, led away by Satan, has grievously revolted from his authority : his laws we have wilfully and continually trampled under our feet. The narrow path of duty and of happiness which, as a loving Father, He so kindly pointed out for us to walk in, we have left for the " broad way that leadeth to destruction." As there is no law without a penalty, God has attached penalties to his code of laws : and to show how much He loves us, how much He desires our happiness, He has made the ultimate penalty as severe as possible.

The Capuans hoped to be able, with Hannibal, their sable leader, to defeat Rome, their sovereign ; but what hope have you, my dear friend, even with the assistance of the arch-

enemy of all good, of freeing yourself from the claims which God has upon you? Now, we know that “what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God”—or, as it may be read, *subject to the judgment of God.* (Rom. iii. 19.) Yes, that is our condition. We are indeed guilty before God, and therefore subject to his righteous judgment. The Romans felt bound to punish their lawful subjects, the Capuans, for their grievous revolt and their alliance with a foreign enemy; much more is God, the moral Governor of the world, bound to punish those who rebel against his rightful authority. He has said, The soul that sinneth, it shall die—be separated from God. No candid reader can peruse the last three chapters in Revelation, nor the history of the rich man and Lazarus in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, without being convinced of the awful nature of that final place of separation.

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,

as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." (2 Cor. v. 20.) Have you, dear reader, heeded these words of inspiration ? If not, then you are at this moment justly exposed to the wrath and curse of a holy, sin-hating God, who sees something more to be feared in sin than in suffering. Are you satisfied with your condition ? Should you die this hour, are you sure of heaven ? If not, I entreat of you not to rest till, with deep earnestness, you ask the momentous question, " What must I do to be saved ? " And may God help you by his Holy Spirit to heed the answer, " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Do you then realize that you are indeed in rebellion against a " perfect government ? " Do you feel that you are at " enmity against God ? " — that " the heart " — yes, *your* heart — " is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked ? " Oh, my dear friend, you cannot feel too deeply the sad truth of these declarations from the inspired pen. What words those are in the last verse of the third

chapter of John: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM.” Men try to forget these solemn facts. We have often heard young men, whose consciences troubled them, arguing against the justice of God in the eternal punishment of the finally rebellious. “But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind me. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.” (Ps. 1. 16, 17, 22.)

If any of these “arrows of the King” have been made sharp in the heart of one of his “enemies”—if you, dear friend, as you have read these solemn warnings from Him who has said, “One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled,” have been led to see yourself a lost and guilty sinner, oh, then, listen while I try to tell you of Jesus and his “finished work.”

The Lord Jesus has looked in pity upon our ruined, rebellious world. He well knew the inflexible nature of law. When these words, "Ye shall not surely die," were spoken in the garden of Eden to the representatives of our race, He knew too well that they were from the "father of lies." He had heard the God of justice utter the warning to you, and to me, and to every child of Adam guilty of voluntary secession from his benign government, "BECAUSE THERE IS WRATH, BEWARE, LEST HE TAKE THEE AWAY WITH HIS STROKE: THEN A GREAT RANSOM CANNOT DELIVER THEE." And such was his wondrous love for every guilty sinner, that with a yearning heart He cried, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" — I give myself a ransom. (Job xxxiii 24.) Yes, He left his throne in heaven, and came to this revolted world to pay the awful penalty of a broken law, and to redeem us from its curse. "THE SON OF MAN CAME . . . TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY." (Matt. xx. 28) : He came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke xix. 10.) Do you feel yourself a

“lost” sinner? Then Jesus has loved you. He has come to save you: thanks be to God, “HE IS ABLE TO SAVE THEM TO THE UTTERMOST THAT COME UNTO GOD BY HIM!” (Heb. vii. 25.)

Let us suppose that, at the time of the fall of Capua, a king, instead of a consul, had been at the head of the government. The news of the revolt of the metropolis of Campagna is heralded through the streets of Rome. Great preparations are being made to recapture this rebellious city. Such mighty armies are being marshalled, that it is evident to all that, whether with or without the aid of the foreign invader, the city must surely be soon compelled to surrender.

A son of the king silently witnesses all this till his heart yearns to deliver the Capuans. His father is a humane king, but he has heard him again and again solemnly declare, that to prevent anarchy and distress throughout the whole realm, he must conquer the Capuans, behead their senators, imprison their nobles, and doom the guilty inhabitants to perpetual slavery far away from their loved homes.

The son sees and feels the justice of all this — sees that after all the father is not prompted to this course by a revengeful spirit, but by a heart of love for *all his subjects*; and yet he longs to find some way to arrest the stroke of justice. A thought strikes him. He knows that his father, the king, would sooner see the whole city of Capua buried beneath a burning volcano than be called to witness the untimely death of his beloved son. With this love for the doomed city burning in his soul, he ventures to approach the throne of the king of Rome. Like Esther pleading for the sentenced Jews before King Ahasuerus, the son is graciously received — the golden sceptre is extended.

Now listen to his words — “The guilty Capuans, thy lawful subjects, O king, have indeed most grievously revolted from thy rightful authority. The sentence passed upon them is most just; shouldst thou allow them to escape with impunity, thy kingdom would be shaken to its foundation. But am not I of more value in thine eyes, and in the eyes of

all thy people, than the city of Capua? Will not the forfeit of my life redeem them from destruction? Oh! if thou wilt but accept me, I will willingly give myself a ransom for them. I will willingly go to the very walls of the city—yea, within the walls—and suffer the tortures of crucifixion, to show them how much I love them, and so teach them the sanctity of law, and the price of the ransom paid for their deliverance.”

Now hear the answer! The father, like Zeleucus the king of the Locrians, so loves his subjects, that he is willing to permit his own son to suffer the severest torture, rather than witness the disasters attendant upon broken laws. Therefore his response—“Thou art dearer to me than the apple of mine eye; thou art mine only son, my well-beloved son. I also love my subjects; I have no wish to destroy Capua. But thou art to me worth more than all the world. My laws would indeed remain untarnished, shouldst thou deign to die in the stead of these rebels. Our armies are able to crush them; and were the command

to go forth, they would soon be our ‘lawful captives.’ But, for *thy sake*, at the very hour of thy death, I will make a proclamation of pardon to all who will confess their guilt, and cast away their weapons of rebellion.”

The son goes forth and yields his life a sacrifice in behalf of the condemned subjects. The wondrous act of love is told to every soul in the city; young and old hear of it. The proclamation is heralded in every street. Who will be so foolish as not to heed this proffer of pardon? Who so hard-hearted as not to love the name of that prince, who has so loved them as to give himself a free ransom for them? Who will not thank the king for giving his son to die for them?

Supposing they had turned a deaf ear to that proclamation of the “conditions of peace”—had shown in every way that they despised the king and his son—would they not have deserved a double retribution from the hands of their sovereign? What punishment too severe for them?

My dear unconverted friend, in condemning

these Capuans for such a course, thou art condemning thyself. “Of how much sorcer punishment” shall ye be thought worthy who have “done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. x. 29.)

In this illustration you see something of the relation in which you stand towards God. Satan has invaded our world, and you are one of those who have been “taken captive by him at his will.” (2 Tim. ii. 26.) You may not realize this fully, but it is nevertheless true. He may have come to you as an “angel of light,” but if you are not a Christian—if you have not been “born again”—if you have not been made “a new creature in Christ,” so that you can say, with a joyful heart, and with a clear understanding, “Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor. v. 17); then it must still be true that you are “taken captive by him at his will,” and that you are “ignorant of his devices.” (2 Cor. ii. 11.)

It is not more true that Hannibal, with his wily deceits, led away the Capuans to revolt

against their natural protectors, to their own ruin, than that “your adversary, the devil” (1 Peter v. 8), has induced you and every child of Adam to rebel against God, your heavenly Father. Neither is it more true that the Romans had power to overcome Hannibal and his allies, than that God has power to overcome and punish forever Satan and his allies. Read in Jude 6 : — “The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” You see, from these solemn words, that the fallen angels are condemned to “everlasting punishment.”

Let me entreat you, beloved reader, to beware, lest by following the “wiles of the devil” (Eph. vi. 11) ye “FALL INTO THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL.” (1 Tim. iii. 6.) Beware, lest in the last day ye hear the dread sentence from the lips of the “Judge of all the earth,” — “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt. xxv. 41.)

You see “everlasting fire” was not “prepared” for you and me, but “for the devil and his angels ;” but if we join his standard, and with him “be found even to fight against God,” may we not justly expect and deserve the fearful retribution in reserve for the arch-deceiver ? The Capuans could not complain of the punishment they received ; and you, too, my dear friend, if you continue to fight against God, will know the awful truth of those words, “Every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.” (Rom. iii. 19.) Will you not, then, receive the truth that you have been led by Satan and by “an evil heart of unbelief,” to fight against God, and to disregard his commands, which are just and good ? “HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT IS CONDEMNED ALREADY.” (John iii. 18.)

The loving Saviour beheld our fearful condition, and offered Himself a ransom for us. His eyes saw the arm of divine justice raised over you — the yawning pit beneath your feet — more dreadful than that pit of Vesuvius into which those three German students fell.

His great heart of love yearned over you. He longed to deliver you.

The love of that prince of Rome for the deluded Capuans was nothing in comparison to the wondrous love of the Son of God for you and me. He saw, that “without the shedding of blood” there could be no “remission of sin.” And the compassionate cry to the holy, sin-hating God was wrung from his lips, as He looked upon you, fellow-sinner, lost and guilty, “Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.” I GIVE MYSELF A RANSOM. Let me, thy well-beloved Son, die, “the just for the unjust.” (1 Peter iii. 18.) I, for the guilty sinner’s sake, will give my back to the smiters. I will not hide my face from shame and spitting. (Isa. 1. 6.)

A God of justice accepted the offer. At the appointed time the Saviour came to die, a sacrifice for your sins and mine. He took upon Him our nature. “Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin,” He lived a life of holy obedience to all the laws

of God. He was “without sin,” and so was able to make an atonement for the sins of others. This holy, spotless Son of God, suffered inconceivable agonies on Calvary’s cross, that you and I might be saved. “He is despised and rejected of men. . . . He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and with his stripes we are [or may be] healed.” (Is. liii. 3-5.)

And yet how little you have thought of this infinite sacrifice made so willingly for you, fellow-traveller to the bar of God ! Have you not often tried to drive away all thoughts of what Jesus has done for you ? Are you not one of those who say, “We esteem Him not” ?

It is my most earnest prayer that you may think of Jesus, and hear Him saying to you, “Look unto me, and be ye saved.” If an earthly friend had done one-thousandth part

of what the Prince of Peace has done for you, would you, think ye, live on year after year, and never in any way express your gratitude ?

A fact in classical history may throw light upon the truth I am trying to impress. Tigranes, King of Armenia, and his father-in law, Mithridates, made war against Rome. After a severe struggle, I think it was Pompey, on the banks of the Euphrates, reduced these kings to homage and submission. The circumstances of their hostility against Rome were so aggravated, that they and all their families expected nothing but death. They no doubt remembered, that about one hundred and fifty years before, fifty-three of the senators of Capua had, for a somewhat similar rebellion against the authority of Rome, been slain with the axe of the executioner. And what more natural than for them to infer that they would be doomed to instant death ? Tigranes tenderly loved his young wife, and was willing to make any sacrifice to save her from a cruel death. He therefore approached the Roman

general, and suppliantly offered to die any death — no matter how painful — if he could thus be accepted as a ransom for her who had been a partner of his joys and sorrows. But, contrary to their expectations, *all were pardoned freely!*

When Pompey left their presence, they vied with each other in their praises of the Roman commander. While some admired the beauty of his person, and others spoke of the magnanimity of his character, only one member of these royal families was silent. When this attracted the attention of the rest, Tigranes turned to his wife, who, with closed lips, still stood gazing upon her husband with a countenance beaming with admiration and gratitude, and asked why *she* had nothing to say in praise of the noble act of Pompey. Her simple answer was: “*I did not see him; I only saw him who offered to die to save my life.*” Her eyes were rivetted on him who only *offered* to die in her stead. But oh! is it not true that you have never once, with penitence for your cruel sins, and with love and

gratitude in your heart, looked to Him who *actually did die* to save you from punishment, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched”? (Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.) How little have you thought of his “agony and bloody sweat!” For you, guilty sinner, He prayed; for you He agonized; for you He sweat drops of blood. Have you never read, in Luke xxii. 44, “Being in an agony He prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground”? Do not, I entreat of you, turn away, but take your Bible and follow the bleeding Son of God, from his night’s agony in the garden, where thrice He prayed, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” to the presence of Annas, then to the judgment-hall of Caiaphas, thence to Pilate, to Herod, and back to Pilate again. See Him “brought as a lamb to the slaughter,” opening not his mouth! See that cruel “crown of thorns” upon his brow! Can you not see fresh drops of blood mingling with his tears? Can you not hear those blows that fall upon

his devoted head? Now with the clenched fist He is buffeted! Now with the palm of the hand insulted, and spit upon! Wonder of wonders! Why stand those weeping angels, longing, and yet unable, to rescue Him from the hands of murderers? Ah, God is there! A God of justice, a sin-hating God has "laid upon Him the iniquity of us all." And our "*sin-bearer*" hears the sentence, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." (Zech. xiii. 7.)

Can you, after all this, turn a deaf ear to the words of Him "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree"? (1 Pet. ii. 24.) Hear his cry, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce wrath!" Oh, look to Him whom your sins have pierced, and mourn. Better to weep now with "godly sorrow" and live, than to dwell forever where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xiii.

12.) Better to heed *his* loving words, "Look unto me and be ye saved," than to cry in vain to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." (Rev. vi. 16.)

Would that you might "just now" "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) See Him lifted up on the cross, that you "might not perish, but have everlasting life." Hear his heart-rending cry, "My God ! my God ! why hast Thou forsaken me ?" Ah, He was forsaken *for your sake*, weeping, trembling sinner. He was "made sin" for you ; treated as a sinner for your sake, that you "might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 20.) Your sins helped to avert the face of an offended God. Your sins helped to drive those nails. Can you not with love and gratitude say —

'Twas for me that Jesus bled  
On the cruel tree:  
There He bowed His thorn-clad head,  
Ah, what agony !

'Twas my sins that nailed Him there;  
Mine that shed his blood;  
Mine that pierced the bleeding side  
Of the Son of God.

It was this thought of the spotless Son of God being "wounded for our transgressions," that melted the heart of Mr. T. A. D. Fessenden, the brother of Wm. Pitt Fessenden, Secretary of the American Treasury. This lawyer attended a series of meetings in Lewiston, Me., in 1866, when the Holy Spirit was showing hundreds their lost condition and need of pardon. Curiosity was at first his only motive. But ere long he began to feel himself a guilty sinner. In relating to a large audience the manner in which he was led to the Saviour, I heard him use the following language, which appeared in the next morning's secular press:

"I cannot refrain from saying that it is repugnant to my natural feelings to speak of myself, but in the hope that it may possibly, with God's blessings, be the means of some little good, I will speak. I feel impelled to

speak for the cause of Jesus and of my late experience, though my words be feeble. My story is a simple one. But a short time since I had supposed that I was possessed of a strong will, of good nerves, and of a clear judgment. I did not think I was emotional, and I remarked to a friend with whom I was conversing, and who mentioned that Mr. Hammond was creating an excitement, that if he could raise any emotion in me, I should like to have him, for it was dull, and had been so long since I had felt emotion, that I should like to feel it. One Sunday evening it entered my mind that I would go and hear. I went and listened intently, but it was with no expectation that it would afford me any pleasure, except that of hearing a stranger.

“I listened to him and went away. I descanted to my friends upon his power of illustrating, and told them that he drew upon his travels for his figures of speech. I was utterly indifferent so far as my personal state was concerned. Some time after, I attended again, and listened attentively. I fastened

my eye upon the speaker, and for some moments his gaze was riveted on mine, as he addressed me in tones of impassioned earnestness to come to Christ. It was thus I began to think, is this real? Is it necessary? Is it a duty we have resting upon us? But when the sermon closed, I walked down the aisle, and out of church alone. I thought then, there is no necessity of my stopping here to talk with these people; it will do well enough for persons not in the habit of thinking for themselves, but not for me. I concluded that I would not go again; but, on reflection, I said, I will go. I am not afraid to hear the man. I went. I was interested in the sermon; I was interested in the experience of Mr. Wight; I was interested and moved by the affecting prayer for physicians and lawyers, more particularly, perhaps, because I had been introduced to Mr. Hammond during the day, and thought that he might have me in his mind, and my heart was somewhat softened; but I did not heed the invitation to stop, but steeling my heart, I walked to the door.

“I was overtaken by him. He urged me and a friend who was with me to remain. My dear old father was praying for me, and kindly pressed me to stay to the Inquiry Meeting. He asked me to promise him that I would pray that night, but I refused to promise, and said I would see him the next day. As I walked down the still streets, my feelings overcame me, and I wept; but when I neared my home, I endeavored to crush out all my feeling of remorse, so that I might enter the presence of my wife calm and unmoved; for I was ashamed to let her see that a man in the prime of life could be so wrought upon, and appear so unmanly.

“I sat down, but my grief overcame me. I covered my face and wept. She sought to comfort me. I choked down my sensation for the moment, and said, ‘This is all excitement — it will pass away;’ but she replied, ‘It is the Spirit of God struggling with you,’ and begged me to yield to his influences. I was softened. I asked her to pray. She did so, and asked me to pray; for the first time since I was a little boy I knelt and prayed.

“The next morning Mr. Adams met me. He talked a moment with me in the street, and I invited him to my office. He then talked and prayed with me, and I tried to pray. He left, and during that day I was overwhelmed with mental anguish. My sins were before me. The memory of my past life came vividly to my mind, and temptations and suggestions of all sorts pressed upon me to shake off these delusions; but I prayed constantly and fervently in my mind that the Spirit of God would not leave me, but would continue to strive. That evening I attended meeting, and heard the story of the Son of God; that He came to save the lost; that for our sakes He was treated as though a guilty rebel; of his agony upon the cross: and when I listened to the words of the dying Jesus, in the extremity of agony, ‘My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?’ my heart melted. I stopped at the Inquiry Meeting, and on my knees I promised God, that if He would forgive my sins, I would take sides with Jesus, that I would stand up for Jesus,

give my heart to Him, and would trust to Him, and be his. I was at peace. Hence I am willing to stand up and speak to you to-night.”

Mr. Fessenden for seven years lived a consistent Christian, and a few months since, in peace and triumph, left this world.

Do not let Satan tempt you to despair of pardon. “It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (1 Tim. i 15.) Paul, who uttered these words, said *he* was the chief of sinners, and he is in heaven to-day. There is hope, then, for you.

John Newton felt himself to be one of the chief of sinners, and yet *he* found peace and pardon. He believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and was saved. He only “looked and lived.” His sins were as scarlet and crimson, but through the wondrous power of that blood which “cleanseth from all sin,” they became as wool and as snow. He had helped to kidnap slaves on the shores of Africa, and had awfully blasphemed God’s name; but the

sight of Jesus on the cross melted his heart.  
Hear him sing:—

“In evil long I took delight,  
Unawed by shame or fear,  
Till a new object struck my sight,  
And stopped my wild career.

“I saw One hanging on a tree,  
In agony and blood,  
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,  
As near his cross I stood.

“Sure never, till my latest breath,  
Can I forget that look;  
It seemed to charge me with his death,  
Though not a word He spoke.

“My conscience felt and owned the guilt,  
And plunged me in despair;  
I saw my sins his blood had spilt,  
And helped to nail Him there.

“A second look He gave, which said,  
‘I freely all forgive;  
This blood is for thy ransom paid,  
I die that thou may’st live.’

“Thus, while his death my sin displays  
In all its blackest hue,  
Such is the mystery of grace,  
It seals my pardon too.”

You may never, dear friend, have the priv-

ilege of looking upon that city where our blessed Saviour “BORE OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BODY ON THE TREE.” But if you will but come and trust alone in Him, you will finally, in triumph, “enter the New Jerusalem” above.

Not long since we travelled five thousand miles, to see “*the place where Christ was crucified.*” I shall never forget the emotions that filled my heart when, as we ascended a northern branch of the Mount of Olives, the Holy City, for the first time, burst upon our view. The tears ran down my cheeks as I exclaimed, “There is the place where Jesus died for me!” I seemed to forget all the world beside, and to feel as I had never done before, the great fact that HE HAD LOVED ME, AND GIVEN HIMSELF FOR ME.

It mattered little to me, whether I could determine the exact spot where *He was wounded* for our transgressions, but it was somewhere there before me; and I was thankful that I had gazed upon the place. That one look was worth all the trouble of our long journey

of five thousand miles. The first question I asked of our guide, when once we approached the Holy City, was, where is "*the place where he was crucified?*" Though I was not at all sure that any one knew the exact spot, still it was to me a pleasure to be taken to the place where thousands firmly believe he gave *His life a ransom for us.* The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is built over the spot. There were people of every clime kissing the very stones. One little boy, from sunny Italy, was kneeling within a few feet from the place, where his father told him Jesus suffered a dreadful death on the cross, that the guilty might be pardoned. No doubt many imagine that a visit to the sacred places in Jerusalem, will go far towards securing them entrance into heaven. All such will find, sooner or later, their grievous mistake.

But no true Christian, who has experienced a saving change, can visit Jerusalem without feeling his heart drawn out in stronger love to the Saviour.

While visiting the supposed site of Cal-

vary, I could but exclaim, with an overflowing heart:

Here it was the Lord of Glory  
At Golgotha died for me,  
Here I read the won'drous story  
Of His death to set me free.

Here His hands and feet all bleeding,  
Fast were nailed unto the cross;  
Here His wounds for me were pleading,  
When my gain was all His loss.

Here by God he was forsaken,  
When he took the sinner's place,  
For His sake I now am taken  
Into favor under grace.

Here the sword of justice slew Him,  
That I might be justified;  
Praise the Lord I ever knew Him,  
That for me He bled and died.

Blessed Jesus, I will love Thee,  
Love Thee till my latest breath,  
And in Heaven I will adore Thee,  
When these eyes are closed in death,

These were *my* feelings; but what, my dear friend, are *yours* as you think of how our dear Redeemer suffered in our stead, on the cross? How can you help but love Him?

While in Naples, I met with a lady who told me that she had often taken her New Testament and gone out into the houses of poor, ignorant Italian women, and read to them the simple story of the sufferings of Christ, and had always seen the tears flow down their cheeks! Why? Because they had never heard such a wonderful story before.

Why is it that *your* heart is not oftener melted into tenderness and love, as you read of His compassion for His enemies? Has it not been because you are, in a measure, "*Gospel hardened?*"

But I would fain believe that your heart is now moved to love this precious Saviour of whom you have been reading. Every page of this book has been written with much prayer. God grant that your love for Him, who not only *offered* Himself as "*our surety*," but who really "**HATH ONCE SUFFERED FOR SINS THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST, THAT HE MIGHT BRING US TO GOD,**" may be far stronger

than was that love of the king's daughter for Tigrannes.

However great and many your sins may be, this loving Saviour waits to welcome you. "*Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.* God is satisfied with His Son's "finished work" for you. Will not you, then, be satisfied? Oh, then, do not *go about any longer to establish your own righteousness.*" "**FOR CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUS TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH.**" Yes, HE has satisfied the claims of God's justice. Oh, then, "**BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.**" Will you not, then, with words like these, pray to Him who has said, "**Ask, and ye shall receive?**"

## PRAYER.

"O God, teach me how to pray. I am a lost, guilty, hell-deserving sinner. I have a thousand times broken thy just and holy laws. I have listened to the father of





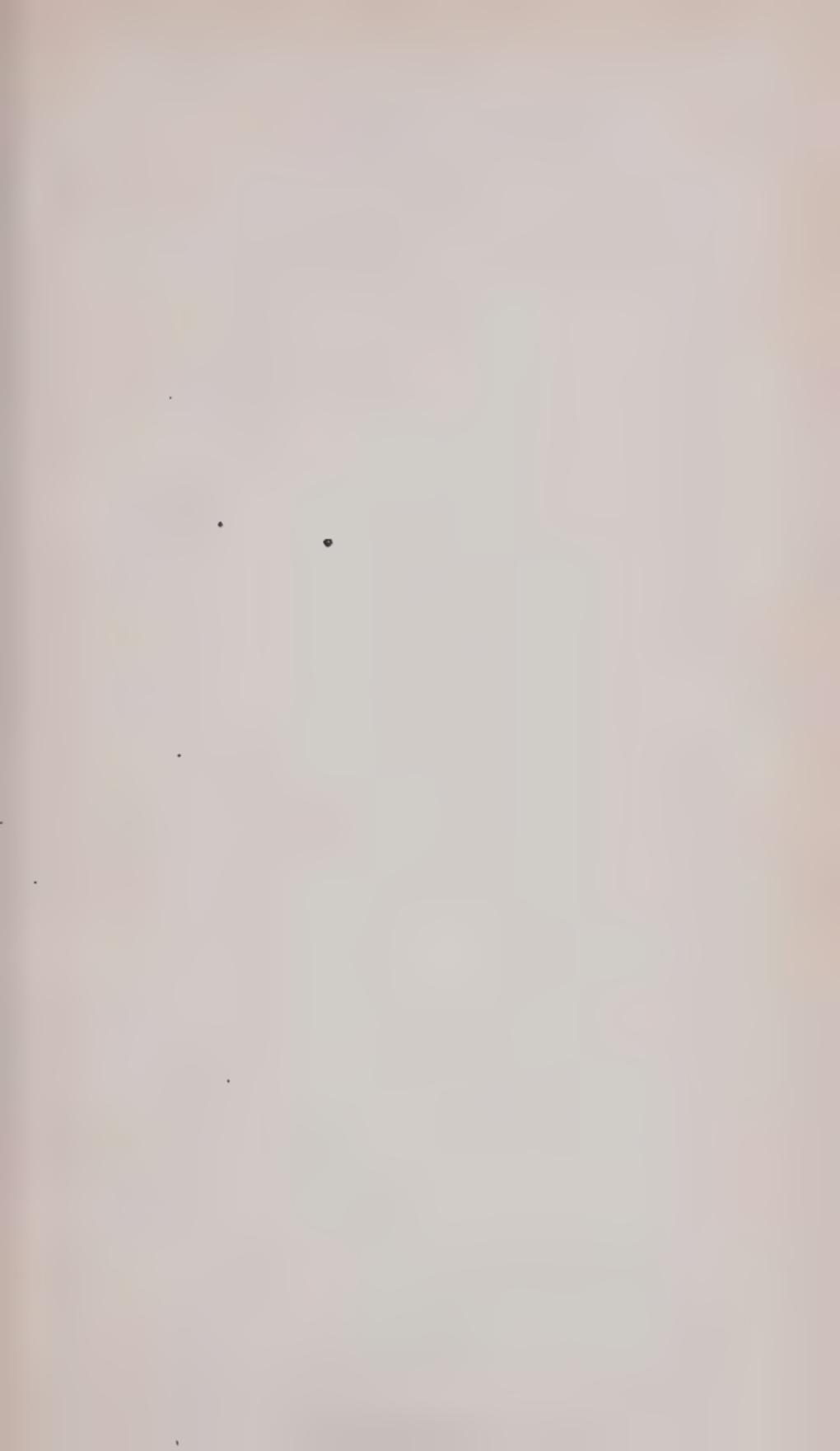
lies, and with him am justly condemned to ‘everlasting punishment.’ Oh, how many times have I rejected Christ, and grieved the Holy Ghost! Hadst Thou, O Holy Spirit, left me, I must have been given over to ‘hardness of heart.’ O God, I thank Thee for this. Help me, gracious Father, to see how Thou canst, for Jesus’ sake, pardon a guilty sinner like me. Open my blind eyes to see how Jesus has died, the ‘Just for the unjust;’ how he was wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my iniquities. I can only offer the prayer of the publican, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ Only for Jesus’ sake canst Thou, O holy God, forgive a rebel like me.

“‘In my hands no price I bring;  
Simply to thy cross I cling;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.’

“Oceans of tears can never cleanse my sins away —

“‘Drops of grief can ne’er repay  
The debt of love I owe.  
Here, Lord, I give myself away;  
'Tis all that I can do.’”

Lord, I believe thou wilt hear and answer,  
for Jesus sake. Amen.











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Bob Armstrong  
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